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### More on woodlice and spiders

Whilst the association between woodlice and spiders is nothing new – *Dysdera crocata* Koch (Araneae, Dysderidae) is widely known as the “woodlouse spider” on account of its preferred diet, the observation by Richard Jones of a specimen of *Porcellio scaber* Latreille (Isopoda, Porcellionidae) in a spider’s web (*Ent. Rec.* **114**: 181) is possibly of more significance than the author intended.

In the British Isles, *Porcellio scaber* is the main host of *Melanophora roralis* L. (Dipt.: Rhinophoridae) although Irwin, 1985 (*Ent. Mon. Mag.* **121**: 38) discovered an association with *Porcellio spinicornis* Say. However, in 1927 W. Lundbeck, when dealing with the “Tachinidae” of Denmark (*Diptera Danica* **7**: 239-264) stated the following in relation to the fly. “Mr. E. Hoffmeyer bred it from egg-masses of [the spider] *Epeira cornuta*, and he communicated to me that the larva was not uncommon in this way; the imago appeared on 1/7”. This alleged association entered the wider British literature in 1942 when Audcent published “A preliminary list of the hosts of some British Tachinidae” (Dipt.). *Trans. Soc. Br. Ent.* **8**: 1-42) and was repeated by van Emden (1954. *Handbooks for the Identification of British Insects* **10**: part 4(a) and also Herting (1961. *Rhinophoridae in Lindner (ed) Die Fliegen der Paläarktischen Region* 216).

In 1956, A. E. Le Gros (*Ent. Rec.* **68**: 111) challenged this on the grounds that the Rhinophoridae are parasites of woodlice. He stated that he had often reared ichneumonids from the egg masses of *Araneus cornutus* Clerck (Araneidae), and had sometimes found beetles, earwigs and woodlice within the retreats of the spider where they had probably crawled for shelter. He concluded “I would suggest that Lundbeck’s record had its origin in a parasitised woodlouse crawling into a *cornutus* retreat and dying; and that the larvae Hoffmeyer found “not uncommon” were probably those of ichneumons which heavily infest *cornutus* egg sacs”.— LAURENCE CLEMONS, 14 St. John’s Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 4NE.